

Standards Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: February 5, 1998

Attending: Belinda Collins (OSS/TS) Chair, Ellyn Beary for William Koch (CSTL), John Mayo-Wells (EEEL), Al Parr (PL), George Quinn (MSEL), Mike Hogan (ITL), Howard Bloom (MEL), Joel Zingeser (BFRL), **OSS staff:** Christine DeVaux, Krista Johnsen Leuteritz, Joan Tyler. **SAC members absent:** Stephen Carpenter (OIAA), Carroll Croarkin (ITL), Lanse Felker (OQP), Cita Furlani (ATP), Roger Kilmer (MEP), and Albert Lee (Program Office).

Handouts for attendees included: 1) Agenda; 2) Action Item List; 3) Graphic Description of Proposed Activities for Strategic Standards Management ; 4) Presentation viewgraphs of talk to VCAT; 5) Article - Standards Management and Texas Instruments; 6) Article - ASTM Launches Web-based Interactive Standards Development Forums.

The following were agenda topics:

1. Open meeting and introductions (Collins)
2. Approval of Minutes - Collins
3. Special Presentation on the topic of "coordinating positions on balloting" speaker - Dr. Kent Reed of BFRL - Kent is the NIST TAG representative for ISO TC184/SC4 and will talk about the balloting process that goes across almost all the NIST labs, and will touch on the underlying technologies and tools that support the process.
4. Review of Strategic Standards Management at NIST - Tyler
5. Discussion on fees for Tags/Secretariats - Collins
6. Review of Action Items - Tyler
7. Update on any standards-related activities/issues - OU's
8. Schedule next SAC meeting - Collins
9. Adjourn - Collins

SAC Meeting Opened (Collins)

Belinda Collins opened the meeting with introductions, asked if there were any changes to the minutes of the December meeting; minutes were approved. She then introduced Kent Reed who spoke on the topic of "coordinating positions on standards-related ballots." The topic had come up at previous meetings, and it seemed appropriate to have someone with experience come talk about the current practice.

Coordinating Positions on Ballots (K. Reed)

Kent began with an overview of the Product Data Exchange Task Group (PDETG) which is composed of members from MEL, BFRL, EEEL, and TS who have come together over the last ten years to address the standards work relating to STEP. Kent explained that he is the NIST US TAG representative for ISO TC184/SC4 and coordinates the NIST position for the ballot items across the various labs.

He outlined the current NIST practice with regard to ISO TC184/SC4 ballots as follows:

- TAG Ballot is received from TAG Secretariat as email, possibly with attachments
- Ballot is retransmitted to PDETG email list, adding 1 to 2 sentence synopsis and an internal due date
- Once a position is established, typically by email discussion, the NIST ballot response is developed and then sent by email to the TAG Secretariat with "Cc: to list"

Kent stated that the process is not always straightforward since there are three families of standards being developed and each standard contains many parts with considerable interplay among ballots.

The following problems were identified with the current practice:

- The email list is open to any interested party, BUT one has to know the list exists to know to join
- The email traffic has a hard-to-understand, stream-of-consciousness quality (real time or archive)
- The struggle with voluminous paper document sets being generated by TC184/SC4---- few documents are available in reviewable electronic form that is easy to distribute

Proposed solutions to the above problems were:

- To deal with list problem, go the HyperNews-like system on internal website
 - > can be "found" by normal search techniques
 - > replaces stream-of-conscious email traffic with comments on pages organized by subject and order
 - > allows any interested NIST party to find out what is happening, asynchronously ("interactive" archive)
- To deal with paper problem, convince ISO secretariat to distribute documents as PDF files

Kent offered the following suggestions for implementing electronic forums:

- don't set up yet-another server!
- for email lists, use the existing ITL-supported listserv mechanism with OSS as the "list administrator"
- for HyperNews, use the existing NIST internal Website with ITL technical support and OSS "news administrator"
- for truer collaborative environments such as MS NetMeeting, seek competent advice from existing projects in OUs

A suggestion was made that it might be appropriate to form a small task group to look into tools to support the various standards activities at NIST. There was consensus to form the task group. Kent volunteered to help, other names suggested were: Craig Schlenoff, Lisa Phillips, and Jimmy Graham. The task group will be chaired by Joan Tyler.

Howard Bloom stated that MEL has been involved with the TC184 standards process for more than ten years, that people come and go but the process is still working.

Mike Hogan mentioned the process adopted by ISO/IEC/JTC1 at the end of 1997. The process uses a Web-based approach - everyone can view documents via the Web. It has kept costs down and people can download documents using PDF. The JTC1 process can be made available to anyone who would like to use it. The question was asked about the resources required to support this type of process. Mike estimated that setting up and maintaining the system would require about one hour per week, file backups require more time.

You can visit the JTC 1 document website and see how JTC 1 document distribution is now done by web technology in place of email, diskette, and paper distribution, see <http://www.jtc1.org>.

You can also visit the JTC 1 TAG website and see how U.S. TAG members track all the JTC 1 documents, see <http://www.jtc1tag.org/j1ndocs.htm>.

Activities for Strategic Standards Management at NIST (Tyler)

Joan provided an overview of activities for strategic standards management at NIST. The idea is to establish the generic or common processes used in standards activities at NIST. After much discussion, it was agreed that a special session should be held to brainstorm, to coordinate all cross-cutting positions and consider the common policy-related issues. It was noted that clear goals should be established prior to the brainstorming session. Joan will provide a draft white paper offering several key ideas to help frame the discussions.

Joel Zingeser said that a tool is under development by Bob Chapman, Office of Applied Economics, to analyze criteria for establishing hierarchies. The tool is being developed in collaboration with ASTM, and could offer some assistance for activities associated with setting priorities. He said that Bob might be able to provide a demonstration for the SAC.

Discussion on Fees for Tags/Secretariats (Collins)

Belinda Collins led a discussion on how fees for standards activities are handled at NIST. She said that several calls had come into her office from individuals at NIST who are trying to figure out how to respond to various organizations demanding payment for dues/fees, etc. OSS is trying to figure out the dimensions of the payments that NIST should provide in order to maintain its commitment and presence in the standards arena. OSS would like to reassure all OUs that it is trying to get more information about what NIST must pay and “does not want anyone dropping out of an activity because they cannot afford dues.”

During the discussion, it was noted that participation in standards activities has declined at NIST (by 15%). It was suggested that it might be a good idea to revisit the data provided on the form 83 and work on electronic distribution and collection of standards participation information. OSS will provide a manual copy of the SAMI database for all OUs at the next meeting. It was also pointed out that consortia participation is not currently tracked in the SAMI database.

It was noted that participation has fallen off significantly at other government agencies as well (in 1997, federal participation in standards dropped by 2000 people). It was stated that fees/dues for participation in standards activities is a problem with long range effects, not only for federal agencies, but is especially hard for small-to-medium sized businesses who are no longer able to participate and have a voice in the process. Another problem is that as agencies are downsized, people who participated in standards activities are not being replaced.

Report on Standards Activities in the OU's (SAC Members)

CSTL - Reported that the EPA program in the Analytical Chemistry Division is well underway.

EEEL - Noted the successful contribution to the IEC standards that deal with electric power and powerlines.

ITL - Reported on the ITL vote on the ISO/IEC JTC1 draft international standard which addresses the Year 2000 issue, it was noted that the vote was “no” due to the 2 digit year option.

MEL - Announced that Mary Mitchell of the Manufacturing Systems Integration Division (now in the Program Office) was recently recognized for her contributions to standards. She was awarded the first annual William J. Conroy Standards Professional Award which was established to recognize an individual from the United States who has shown exceptional leadership in the development or implementation of Product Data Exchange standards.

MSEL - Is working on gathering its standards-related success stories.

Action Item List:

Krista Johnsen Leuteritz

- Work with Centennial Committee relative to SAC input (ongoing)
- Will conduct workshop on standards participation and NIST policies for new employees (1/2 day - 9/98)

Overman

- Put SAMI database on-line. Estimated completion 4/98.
- Contact Kevin Brady to find out if updates to NIST employee participation in SDO's can be made electronically
- Provide relevant SAMI database information to OU's for review (3/98)

Tyler

- Ask Steve Carpenter to talk at a future SAC meeting to address international standards activities
- Provide framework for strategic standards processes at NIST for consideration by SAC members (estimated completion 5/98)
- Develop and publish success stories (or failures) about standards development as a NIST-IR, using Technical Highlights and the Update as a starting point (ongoing)
- Contact Bob Chapman about demonstration of priority-setting tool (3/98)
- Establish and chair task group to identify a suite of IT tools to support standards-related activities at NIST - also related to strategic standards management processes (4/98)

OSS

- Investigate standards policy and technical standards position at NIST
- Will conduct a general workshop on "what OSS does" (1/2 day)
- Provide input on NIST view of the economic benefits gained from its standards participation
- Provide additional information on "dues/fees" for standards-related activities

SAC Members

- Provide input to OSS (Tyler) on the Strategic Standards Management framework/plan
- Provide information to OSS (Tyler) for the publication of the Success Stories
- Provide suggestions on topics for future discussion (ongoing)

OU Assignments:

- Put standards-related activities on home pages; link to OSS homepage

